*NEWS From:*

# Congressman Mike Honda

FIFTEENTH DISTRICT - CALIFORNIA

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Contact: Ruben Pulido Jr.
202.225.3327 ruben.pulido@mail.house.gov

## Rep. Honda Introduces Bill to Define, Develop, and Measure Effectiveness of National Nanotechnology Strategy

WASHINGTON, October 17, 2002 — Today, Representative Mike Honda (D – San Jose) announced that he has introduced the Nanoscience and Nanotechnology Advisory Board Act of 2002 (H.R. 5669). This legislation would establish an independent advisory board, comprised of leaders from industry and academia, to advise the President of the United States and Congress on research investment strategy, policy, objectives, and oversight related to the federal government's National Nanotechnology Initiative (NNI).

The National Research Council recently assessed the effectiveness of NNI and issued a report titled *Small Wonders, Endless Frontiers: An Assessment of the National Nanotechnology Initiative.* The report concluded that with the current structure of the NNI there is "no advice from the outside" or straightforward way "to seek opinions from the community at-large," and that there is considerable need for an overarching strategic plan. This legislation would create an advisory board of experts who would help articulate short-term (1-5 years), medium-range (6-10 years), and long-range (10+ years) goals and objectives and establish performance metrics. The board would also submit an annual report to the President and Congress regarding nanotechnology progress, and a review on funding levels for nanotechnology activities for each federal agency.

"It will take many years of sustained federal investment for the nanotechnology industry to achieve maturity, and it is critical that the President has structures in place to ensure that the U.S. leads the world in its development," said Rep. Honda. "The federal government's nanotechnology strategy must have clear goals and metrics to assess our country's progress. Additionally, nanotechnology will give rise to a host of novel social, ethical, philosophical, and legal issues. It will be important to have a group in

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place to predict and work to alleviate anticipated problems."

Nanotechnology refers to the ability of scientists and engineers to manipulate matter at the level of single atoms, and small groups of atoms. With new tools, structural properties of matter 1/100,000 the width of hair are being manipulated by researchers. Nanoscale work will enable the development of unprecedented scientific and technological opportunities that will benefit society by changing the way many things are designed and made in information technology, medicine, energy, biotechnology, electronics and almost every conceivable discipline or industry. For the technology sector, nanotechnology processes will allow semiconductor innovation to advance Moore's Law beyond the limitations imposed by today's design, development, and fabrication tools.

In 1996, a federal interagency working group was formed to set up and define a national nanotechnology strategy. This developed into the NNI, which is a collaborative initiative of 13 federal agencies. According to the National Science Foundation, the market for nanotechnology products and services in the United States alone could reach over $1 trillion by 2015.

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